

IEP Tidal Wetlands Monitoring Project Work Team
Meeting Notes
June 25, 2014
DWR – West Sacramento – Room 119

Meeting Attendants

DFW - Alice Low (via phone), Rosemary Hartman, Dave Contreras, Trishelle Morris, Andy Rockriver, Adam Ballard, Randy Baxter, Michael Eakin, Hildie Spautz, Dave Zezulak, Junko Hoshi

USFWS – Steven Culberson, Denise Barnard, Jake Osborne, Katherine Sun

USGS – Jan Thompson, Tara Morgan, Roger Fujii

DWR – Ted Sommer, Erik Loboschetsky, Randy Mager, Michal Koller, Mike Bradbury, Sonia Miller, Gina Benigno, Dan Riordan, Caitlin Roddy, Anitra Pawley

N/A – Bruce Herbold

ICF – Rebecca Sloan

SFEI – April Robinson

DSP – Jennifer Bigman, Lauren Hastings

NOAA – Brycen Swart

DSC – Daniel Huang, Chris Enright

ESA – Ramona Swenson

UCD – Jim Hobbs, Jon Cook

MWD – Shawn Acuna

WWD – Sheila Greene

Topic: Team Mission Statement

Alice discussed the general team mission; the team is tasked to develop a system wide generalized monitoring plan for tidal marsh restoration. The focus will be fish and food chain and provide technical assistance to other programs. The Project Work Team will be working together to help develop standardized monitoring techniques for tidal marsh restoration sites.

Some of the comments made by members of the group are as follows:

- A work plan for the group may be beneficial to help steer products (perhaps project performance) and meet deadlines.
- Once the monitoring plan has been developed, the PWT can meet to evaluate whether the methods have met the goals and adjust accordingly.
- There are similar tidal marsh restoration efforts and a connection should be made with those projects for guidance on monitoring metrics, methods, types of gears to use and sampling strategy.
- Focus should be on project goals and performance rather than how to monitor.
- Alice would like the team to focus more on the science of monitoring, rather than political or regulatory issues.
- Monitoring will need to focus on what our goals and objectives are and also try to fill in conceptual model gaps.

- The geographic scope will include Suisun Marsh; coordination between projects will need to occur.
- Incorporate why FRPA was initiated into the mission statement (ie habitat restoration to improve production that will benefit the food web).
- Tidal marsh restoration may only attract fish to one spot rather than result in population increases; overall benefits to species will need to be evaluated based on comparison of site-specific data with data from long term monitoring programs.
- During sampling design of the monitoring program be aware of a constantly changing tidal marsh and have common techniques and measurements that are comparable across monitoring sites.
- Ideally a generalized monitoring program should be completed by the end of 2014.
- Project Work Team meetings will occur monthly with the possibility of sub-groups meeting more frequently.

Action Items

*Lauren Hastings will provide a list of on-going efforts (e.g., Delta Restoration Network) that present opportunities for collaboration/integration.

*Based on comments from the PWT, the mission statement needs to be revised to encompass tangible goals and objectives. Possibly add a problem and big picture target statements. All comments and edits can be emailed to Alice Low.

Topic: Conceptual Models

Rosemary Hartman gave an overview on the DRERIP tidal marsh and Delta food web model

https://www.dfg.ca.gov/erp/current_models.asp

- The DRERIP conceptual models need to be updated and incorporate the goals and objectives of tidal marsh restoration. The current tidal marsh model is based on a mature system.

Action Item

*A subgroup of the PWT will form for the purpose of updating the tidal marsh, food web, and other relevant conceptual models. Individuals that expressed interest in participating the subgroup included Bruce Herbold, Ted Sommer, Chris Enright, Anitra Pawley, Jenny Bigman, Hildie Spautz, Rosemary Hartman, and Steve Culberson.

- Current FRPA monitoring efforts focus on aquatics and not terrestrial (ie birds). Other groups may be interested in providing some terrestrial monitoring and FRPA should try to coordinate efforts with them.

Topic: Hypotheses

The group briefly discussed the previously distributed set of hypotheses, but agreed that developing a final set of hypotheses and metrics will have to wait until after the goals and objectives around which

the program will be designed are clearly articulated and the relevant conceptual models have been updated.

Some comments on the preliminary hypotheses and future needs are as follows:

- The draft hypotheses are more predictive and should be broken down into testable hypothesis.
- Perhaps change the draft hypotheses to expected outcomes and look for indicators to meet it.
- Many of the metrics associated with the draft hypotheses will be difficult to monitor and funding may constrain the parameters measured.
- Hypothesis should link to the conceptual model to identify key metrics and processes.
- It will take time for the restored tidal marshes to provide beneficial habitat. The hypotheses should include recognition of site evolution trajectories and time frames.
- The PWT should look at similar projects in place and measure in comparable ways.
- Dutch Slough and Lower Yolo Ranch plans can provide guidance for phrasing goals, objectives, and purpose.
- The ultimate objective of FRPA is to fulfill a portion of the requirements stipulated in the Biological Opinions.
- The goals, objectives, and monitoring metrics should focus on tidal marsh benefits to smelt (stable isotopes were identified as a potential tool).
- Monitoring efforts will increase if we study which attributes of the habitat restoration contribute to benefit fish rather than just how the performance of the marsh restoration benefits fish.
- Developing monitoring plans and updating the conceptual models will probably happen in parallel due to current site specific monitoring needs.

Action Items

*Alice will set up an email reflector

*The PWT team should look at the hypotheses and monitoring metrics described in the FRPA, Dutch Slough, and Lower Yolo Ranch plans to provide guidance on developing hypothesis and metrics to measure.

*Randy Mager will send out the Dutch Slough plan.

*Ramona Swenson will send out a Lower Yolo Ranch plan as well as other related plans.

*Chris Enright will talk with the Delta Landscape Project to talk with us at the next meeting.

*Lauren Hastings will report on how our work fits into other concurrent efforts at the next meeting.

Next meeting date will be July 30 from 9-12 at DWR (West Sac) Room 106.